

Detective _____'s Notebook



Traits of a Mystery

- The story is like a puzzle or game.
- Clues are scattered throughout the story.
- Plots, events and characters are carefully “woven” together.
- There are often several possible solutions to the story.
- There is often an obvious climax when the mystery is solved and explained.
- The main character is often not a detective, but rather someone who happens to get involved.
- There is often suspense, danger, and pursuit that “pull” the reader into the story.
- Sometimes there is a time limit that the characters must work together against.
- Sometimes the reader knows things about the mystery that the characters don’t know.
- Sometimes the author deliberately gives miscues or leaves information out to confuse the reader.
- Readers often find themselves making guesses and predictions while reading.
- Some mysteries include a thread of humor.

Name: _____

Date: _____

The Detective's Dictionary

alibi - an excuse that a suspect uses to show that he or she was somewhere other than at the scene of the crime when the crime was committed

clue - a fact or object that helps to solve mysteries

crime - an act that is against the law

detective - a person who investigates mysteries and gathers information

evidence - something that helps prove who committed the crime

mystery - something that is secret and unknown

red herring - a false lead that throws the investigator off track

sleuth - another name for a detective

suspect - a person who is believed to have *possibly* committed the crime

victim - someone who is harmed or suffers some loss because of the crime

witness - someone who saw the crime being committed and can provide some information



 SCHOLASTIC

<http://teacher.scholastic.com>

Ingredients for a Mystery

When cooking up a mystery, authors use this tasty recipe.

Directions: Check all of the ingredients found in the mystery you read.

CHARACTERS:

- ☐ **Suspects:** Characters believed to have possibly committed the crime
- ☐ **Detective:** Character trying to solve the mystery
- ☐ **Witnesses:** Characters who saw the crime being committed

SETTING:

- ☐ This is the location where the mystery takes place.

PLOT:

When reading a mystery, the story usually includes one of the following:

- ☐ A problem that needs to be solved
- ☐ An event that cannot be explained
- ☐ A secret
- ☐ Something that is lost or missing
- ☐ A crime that has been committed



CLUES:

- ☐ Clues are hints that can help the reader and the detective solve the mystery. They can be things people say or do, or objects that are found that provide important information.
(Check the box if the mystery you read had clues.)

RED HERRINGS:

- ☐ These are distractions or false clues that may lead the reader or the detective off track. Red herrings often make it more difficult to solve a mystery. (Check the box if the mystery you read had a red herring.)

RECIPE FOR A MYSTERY:

Most mysteries are set up the same way. The structure of a mystery usually looks like this:

- ☐ **Beginning:** Characters are introduced and the reader learns about the problem
- ☐ **Middle:** Detectives work to solve the mystery by interviewing suspects and gathering clues
- ☐ **End:** The mystery is solved

Dr. Jake Wexler	Barney Northrup	Otis Amber	Theo Theodorakis	Turtle Wexler

Flora Baumbach	Chris Theodorakis	Sandy McSouthers	Grace Windsor Wexler	Doug Hoo

Angela Wexler	Samuel W. Westing	Mr. James Shin Hoo	Sydelle Pulaski	J.J. (Josie-Jo) Ford
---------------	-------------------	--------------------	-----------------	----------------------

Julian R. Eastman	Dr. Sidney Sikes	E.J. Plum	Doctor Denton Deere	Berthe Erica Crow
George Theodorakis	Catherine Theodorakis	Madame Hoo	Violet Westing	